

**SREERASTU**

**SRIMALLOKA GURAVE NAMAH  
SRIMAD VARA VARA MUNAYE NAMAH**

# **TATTVATRAYA**

**(The Three Entities or Truths)**

**Published in Memory of the Six Hundredth Year's Celebrations of  
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**[ SUPPLEMENT TO THE SRI RAMANUJAN ]**

**(The English adaptation of SARARTHA MALIKA,  
the quintessence of the unique commentary of that  
great Glossator, Srimad Vara Vara Muni,  
graciously contributed by Jagadacharya  
Simhasanadipathi, Maha Vidwan,  
P. B. ANNANGARACHARYA  
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# TATVATRAYA

## INTRODUCTION

Among our great preceptors (Poorvacharyas), who had enriched our system of philosophy, giving a clear-cut form and direction to our theological approach, Pillai Lokacharya stands right in the forefront. It is significant that the phrase 'संसारभोगि-संदष्ट-जीवजीवातवे नमः' (Samsara-bhogi-sandashta-Jeeva-Jevatave namah) occurs only in the invocatory sloka dedicated to this preceptor. In this, he has been rightly referred to as the very elixir of life for those stung by the deadly serpent of Samsara. More than his profound knowledge, what really elevated him to such a lofty stature were his numerous texts through which he opened up vast treasures of essential knowledge, paving the way for the self-centred, struggling house-holders, caught up in the eddies and whirlpools of 'Samsara' to become ardent aspirants to Moksha and making those already aspiring for Moksha, beam with the halo of 'Released' souls, and so on, in the ascending scale of spiritual progress. Even this huge reservoir of knowledge would have become unavailing [had] it not been for the flood-gates, graciously provided by Srimad Vara-Vara-Muni, for an effective flow of all that knowledge through his lucid commentaries, sweet and scintillating.

(2) An even more productive channel of distribution bringing within its purview a much larger area of contacts is found in the 'Sarartha Malika', 'Sarartha Deepika' and several other easily assimilable commentaries, graciously contributed by Jagadcaharya Simhasanadhipathi, Maha Vidwan, P. B. Annangaracharya Swami. The English rendering of 'Mumukshupadi' and 'Tatvatraya' as presented by this mighty Savant, is now before the Public, as part of the 'Book-project', announced by him sometime back, in connection with the ensuing sex-centenary celebrations of Sri Manavala Mamunigal. It is noteworthy that a knowledge of 'Tattvatraya' — the three entities (Truths) or fundamental principles, namely, 'Chit' (Sentient beings or the individual souls 'Achit' (non-sentient matter) and Eswara (The Supreme Lord), their salient features and inter-relation, is as indispensable as that of the three mystery lores (Rahashya granthas), 'Thirumantra', 'Dvaya' and 'Charama Sloka', comprised in 'Mumukshupadi'.

(3) तत्त्वज्ञानान्मुक्तिः (Tattva gnanan mukti) is the creed of the Vedantins. The exact import of the 'Tattvas', their classification and composition, how a knowledge thereof results in 'Moksha' and what exactly is meant by 'Moksha' have been explained in this book, which is, as it were, a Manual of Visishtadvaita system of philosophy.

S. SATYAMURTHI AYYANGAR



# T A T V A T R A Y A

Salutation to Mānavaḷa Mahamuni, the repository of Srisaileśa's grace, the ocean of devotion and other auspicious qualities and the very personification of love for Ramanuja, the prince among ascetics!

Salutation to the great preceptor, Lokacharya, son of Krishnapada, and Saviour of those stung by the deadly serpent of Samsara!

## SECTION I

### Chit or Sentient beings

1—2: तत्त्वज्ञानान्मुक्तिः (Tattva-gnanan muktiḥ), that is, knowledge of the 'Tattvas' (fundamental truths or principles) is essential for attaining salvation (moksha). This is a creed to which all Vedantins subscribe. The aspirant to Moksha should, therefore, acquire a knowledge of 'Tattvatraya', the three fundamental truths or principles or entities, as the word 'Tattva' could be interpreted, at the time of attaining salvation. The three entities are (1) 'Chit' (Sentient beings); (2) *Achit* (non-sentient matter) and (3) Eswara (The Lord).

No doubt, it is rightly held that even sub-human species such as animals, birds and the immobile trees etc., totally devoid of the capacity to know these truths, can attain salvation if only they had the good fortune to come in contact with a Sri Vaishnava and be graced by Him. There is, however, no inconsistency in this, inasmuch as the possession of the knowledge in question is enjoined on the Sri Vaishnava and it is only the contact with a person so qualified, which will be fruitful. But then, it might be asked in the light of the Upanishadic text 'Tamevam vidwan amirta iha bhavati, nanyah pantha ayanaya vidyate',\* whether knowledge of Godhead alone would not suffice and where exactly is the compulsion to know all the three principles. The point to be emphasised here is that the Lord is to be comprehended as different from the other two entities, namely, sentient souls and non-sentient matter, pervading them, supporting and controlling them as the supreme Ordainer and Master of them all. In fact, it is this very Upanishad, which says "Bhokta bhogyam preritaram cha matva jushtastatastena amritatvameti".§ Here 'Bhokta' refers to the sentient soul, 'bhogyam' is non-sentient matter and 'Prerita' denotes the Lord (Eswara). Well, these are the three entities, whose detailed knowledge one ought to possess for attaining salvation.

3—7: "Chit" (sentient beings) refers to the individual souls. The essential nature of the individual soul is as indicated below: It is distinct from the

\* तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति, नान्यः पन्था अयनाय विद्यते ।

§ भोक्ता भोग्यं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा जुष्टस्ततस्तेवामृतत्वमेति ।



body, the sense-organs, the mind, the breath and the intellect. It has an inherent sense of awareness and is blissful, and eternal. It is of the size of an atom, unmanifest to the senses, non-comprehensible in the sense that it cannot be thought of like matter, organless and immutable. It is the substratum of knowledge and is directed and supported by the Lord to whom it is subservient.

The soul is held to be different from the body, mind, senses etc., because the soul is the subject-matter of the word 'I' (aham) while all the rest are referred to as its possessions and/or attributes, as 'My body', 'My mind', 'My sense', etc., bringing out the distinction between the possessor and the objects possessed, even as 'My father', 'My son', would indicate the father as different from the son. And, then, the possessions are denoted by the word 'This' or 'These' and the soul by the word 'I'. At this stage, it might be argued that because the soul is referred to as 'I', the expressions 'I am stout', 'I am lean' could also refer to a stout/lean soul. This doubt is resolved by interpreting these expressions as 'I have a stout/lean body', the quality of being stout or lean being that of the body and not of the soul, even as 'I am a man', 'I am a Deva' would mean 'I have a human/celestial body'. Further, the soul's consciousness of a stout or a lean body enveloping it subsists only during the wakeful period and not during sleep when the consciousness of the body altogether disappears. Again, birth marks the appearance of the body and death, its disappearance, whereas the soul is an everlasting single entity and therefore it is, that one could claim, 'This is the result of the deeds performed by me in a previous birth'. The soul, is thus comprehended as different from the body etc. Even assuming that there are limitations and/or shortcomings in intellectual reasonings of the kind, the scriptures come to our aid in pinpointing the soul as an entity apart from the body etc.

\* पञ्चविंशोऽयं पुरुषः । \* पञ्चविंश आत्मा भवति ।

\* भूतानि च कवर्गेण चवर्गेणेन्द्रियाणि च । दवर्गेण तवर्गेण ज्ञानगन्धादयस्तथा । मनः पकारेणैवोक्तं  
फकारेण त्वहंकृतिः । बकारेण भकारेण महान् प्रकृतिरुच्यते । आत्मा तु स मकारेण  
पञ्चविंशः प्रकीर्तितः ।

\* पञ्चभूतात्मके देहे देही मोहतमोवृतः । अहं ममैतदित्युच्चैः कुरुते कुमतिर्मतिम् ॥

\* आकाशवाय्वग्निजलपृथिवीभ्यः पृथक् स्थिते । अनात्मन्यात्मविज्ञानं कः करोति क्लेबरे ॥

8: The essential nature of the individual soul has been set out earlier (aphorism 4). Now, the several attributes mentioned therein are being elaborated upon, one by one. By the soul's native sense of awareness is meant that it is in a position to project or manifest itself, unaided by external knowledge; in other words, the soul is self-luminous, even as (deepa) light reveals itself and does not need another to reveal it. अत्रायं पुरुषः स्वयं ज्योतिर्भवति (atrayam purushah swayam jyotir bhavati).



**9—10:** When it is said that the soul is of the form of bliss, it means that by itself, the soul is blissful or delectable. To understand this calls for no special effort or the aid of the scriptures. When a person who wakes up after a spell of sleep, says 'I slept happily', the happiness in question should obviously be assigned to the soul which, during sleep, has no contact whatsoever with anything external. To stretch it to mean that the person slept so as to produce happiness afterwards would amount to going beyond the meaning of the words in the statement 'I slept happily'. Such an interpretation would be as perverse as explaining, "I sang sweetly" to mean 'I sang so as to produce sweetness afterwards'. Does it mean anything but that the singing itself was sweet and sweetness was a concurrent experience of the singer as distinguished from something produced or experienced after the singing was over? Also c.f. "निर्वाणमय एवायम् आत्मा" "(nirvanamaya evayam atma) "ज्ञानानन्दमयस्त्वात्मा" (gnanananda-mayas tvatma), "ज्ञानानन्दैकलक्षणम्" (gnananandaika-lakshanam) etc.

**11—12:** The soul exists at all times, and that is why it is said to be 'eternal'. To the query why then there is birth as well as death, the answer is: birth only means association of the soul with the body and death means disintegration of the body or dissociation of the soul from the body. It is the body that comes and goes while the soul stays on for ever—c.f. 'Na jayate mriyate va vipaschit' न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चित् । (Gita II-20).

**13—17:** How is the soul considered to be atomic in size? It has been stated in the scriptures that the soul is located in the region of the heart, then leaves it, goes to the upper worlds and then comes down. Hence the soul is understood to be of the size of an atom. The relevant scriptural texts, such as 'Utkranti-gatyagateenaam' (उत्क्रान्तिगत्यागतीनाम्) of Brahma-sutra, need be referred to in this context.

Well, if the soul is merely of the size of an atom and stays in the cardiac region, how does it experience, all at once, pain and pleasure, from head to foot, (i.e.) all over the body? Such an experience of the atom-sized soul, seated in the heart, is due to the permeation, all over, of its inherent attributive knowledge, from where it is seated. This is like the dispersal, in different directions, of the rays of the gem, the Sun and the lamp, located in a particular place. c.f. Brahma sutra 'gunadva alokavat' (गुणाद्वा आलोकवत्) and the commentary thereof in 'Sribhashya.' Apart from this experience of a pervasive knowledge inside the same body, even the simultaneous assumption of a number of bodies by one and the same individual, as Sage Saubhari did, is achieved only by this very process, namely pervasion of the soul's attributive knowledge.

**18:** The soul is unmanifest, that is, it cannot be apprehended by the sense-organs of sight, etc., in just the same way as they apprehend pots, clothes, etc.



The soul can be apprehended only by the mind. It is, however, not on a par with the mythical sky-borne lotus, the horse's horns, or the son of a barren woman, which too cannot be comprehended by the sense-organs, because these things just do not exist.

**19:** The soul cannot be thought of, as belonging to the same class or category as the non-sentient things. c.f. 'avyaktoyam achintyoyam' (अव्यक्तोऽयम् अचिन्त्योऽयम्)—Gita II-25.

**20:** The soul is not an assemblage of parts—like the material things. It has no parts or limbs but is made up solely of knowledge. (vignana-mayah). (विज्ञानमयः).

**21:** The soul is immutable, that is, non-changing. Unlike the non-sentient matter, which undergoes modifications in form and size, the soul remains in one and the same state and does not undergo changes. c.f. 'avikaryah ayamuchyate'—(अविकार्यः अयमुच्यते ।) Gita II-25. The soul is denoted by the word 'akshara'—the non-changing.

**22:** The soul being as described above, it is beyond the mischief of sharp instruments, fire, water, air, etc. Instruments shall not cleave it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot drench it, nor can air dry it or the Sun wither it out. c.f. Gita (II-23-24).

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः । न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥  
अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च । नित्यस्सर्वगतस्स्थाणुः अचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥

**23—25:** The Jains hold that the soul is of the size of the body, so as to account for the soul's experience of pain and pleasure in different parts of it. But this is at variance with the Vedic texts which declare the soul as 'akshara' (i.e.), non-changing—'amritaksharam harah' (अमृताक्षरं हरः) and atomic in size—'Eshonuratma' (एषोऽणुरात्मा), 'Valagra-sathabhagasya' (वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च । भागो जीवस्स विज्ञेयः) etc. Again, the soul, according to its desert (fruits of its actions) acquires the body of an elephant or of an ant. If the soul should be co-extensive and co-expansive with the body it takes on, from time to time, it has to alternately bloat up to the enormous size of an elephant or shrink down to the size of the tiny ant, which sounds ludicrous indeed. Further, this view will not accord with the essential nature of the Sages and Yogis, who, by dint of their special attainments, assume different forms at different times. It would be nothing short of fantastic to imagine their expanding or being cut to size, to fit in with the different bodies they assume. This has been refuted, at great length in Sribhashya.



**26—37:** The soul is the substratum of knowledge, that is, the repository or seat of knowledge. The Upanishads say that the soul is knowledge itself and is also the seat of knowledge. This is like unto the light and its source, the lamp, both of which are bright. That the soul is the residence of knowledge is supported by Vedic texts such as 'Vignataramare kena vijaneeyat', 'Janatyevayam purushah' (विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात्, जानात्येवायं पुरुषः) etc. If however, the soul is only 'knowledge' and not its source, as Budhists and certain others hold, the expression 'I know' has no meaning or relevance and it should be reshaped as 'I am knowledge'. But expressions such as 'I have grasped this meaning', 'I quite follow this', etc., are very much in vogue. This means, the individual soul is receptive to all that knowledge. And when it is said that the individual soul is the knower, it should be deemed to have been said, by implication, that the soul is also the Agent (Doer) for the acts of commission and omission flowing from such knowledge and the Experiencer of the fruits of those acts.

The Sankhyas say that the doership vests only in the Gunas (Sathva, Rajas and Tamas), the components of prakriti (non-sentiment matter) and not in the individual soul, who however, tastes the fruits of the deeds. This cuts across the obligation of the individual soul to obey the dictates of the scriptures; the soul experiencing the fruits of the acts committed by the Gunas, for which the individual is not responsible, would be meaningless and irrational. The scriptures (Sastras) are those that ordain by instilling the requisite knowledge to do certain acts and to refrain from doing certain others. This knowledge can be imparted only to the knowledgable individual and not to the inert matter, which is devoid of the faculty of perception and understanding. The dictates of the Sastras, which are in the form of 'Do's (Do this, that and the other) and 'Dont's (Don't do this that and the other) can hardly be addressed to the prakriti (gunas) which are nonsentient. He who enjoys the fruits such as going to swarga or ascending the heavens ought to be the doer, to merit those fruits. c.f. 'Swarga-kamo Yajeta', 'Mumukshuh Brahma upaseeta', etc. (स्वर्गकामो यजेत, मुमुक्षुः ब्रह्मोपासीत ।) The Sankhya concept is opposed to the teachings of Gita. c.f. "Karya-karana-kartrutve hetuh prakriti-ruchyate, Purushas sukhadukhanam bhoktrtve heturuchayate". कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते । पुरुषस्सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ This theme has been elaborated in the Sribhashya while commenting on the Brahma Sutra 'Karta Sastrarthavattvat'. (कर्ता शास्त्रार्थवत्त्वात् ।)

Having established that the doership belongs to the individual soul, will all, that he does, be in keeping with his essential nature? No, whatever he does in regard to the enjoyment of wordly pleasures, he does under the influence of, rather, in association with the Gunas. c.f. 'Prakrteh Kriyamanhani gunhaih karman; ..... Karta ahamiti manyate'. प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः । अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताऽहमिति मन्यते ॥ Gita 3-27.



The question posed next is whether the agency (action) of the individual is dependent on the Lord or independent of Him. As knower (gnata), doer (karta) and enjoyer (bhokta) the individual soul possesses a consciousness, which expresses itself in such states as thinking (gnana) desiring (chikeersha) and striving (prayatna). But these states are controlled by the Lord without whose assent, the thinking etc., cannot blossom into action. The individual doership is, therefore, dependent on the Lord. At this stage, a doubt might arise as to why, in that case, the individual should at all be affected by the merits and demerits of such acts. The freedom to act is no doubt the Lord's gift to the individual soul as to enable the latter to utilise it for his good. The Lord as the 'Antaryami', the universal controller residing inside every soul, remains neutral or passively quiescent in regard to the initial effort of the individual in the exercise of this gift of freedom of action. Thereafter, the Lord not only watches approvingly the progress of the individual and makes him prosper in his earnest endeavours (i.e.) those which conform to the scriptural injunctions, but also infuses in him, in an ever-increasing measure, the relish for doing good acts. On the other hand, when the individual moves in the retrograde direction, the Lord visits on him His displeasure and disapproval in the form of punishments (sorrows and sufferings), thereby giving him a chance to correct himself and tread the right path.

If the soul is the sub-stratum or seat of knowledge, why is it mentioned in the scriptures as knowledge?—'Yo vignāne', 'vignanam yagnam tanute' \* यो विज्ञाने तिष्ठन्, \* विज्ञानं यज्ञं तनुते etc. As explained earlier, the soul is able to project itself, unaided by external knowledge. Even as knowledge is self-revealing and makes other things known, the soul is self-luminous knowledge as well as the possessor of attributive knowledge, which makes other things known. Hence it is denoted as knowledge; c.f. the lamp and the light it throws all round, both of which are luminous.

**38—41:** The Lord, who pervades all things that exist, rules and guides them all, by being the support, the ground and substance of all existence. By the soul's subservience to the Lord is implied that he should endear himself to the Lord like flowers, sandal paste, betel leaves etc., to be used by Him and His devotees, as they please. Unlike the houses, lands, the son, the wife, estates, household servants etc., belonging to a person staying apart from him and capable of being known independently, the soul's subservience to the Lord should be like that of one's body, incapable of existing and being known independently.

**42—45:** The individual souls at the different levels of unfoldment fall under three categories, namely (i) those still in bondage (baddhas), caught up in the terrific involvement of birth and death; (ii) those liberated from bondage and residing in the High Heavens, the land whence there is no returning (Muktas); this category also embraces those released from the bondage of samsara but, who prefer to remain isolated in enjoyment of their own selves, (Kevalas); and (iii) the



ever-free celestials (Nitya soories) like Adi Sesha, Garuda and Vishvaksena, who never passed through the gruelling mill of samsara with its involvement in the cycle of births and deaths.

**46—47:** The soul, with its inherent qualities of bliss and intelligence, got entangled in the bondage of samsara, engulfed by ignorance (avidya), the fruits of actions, good and bad (karma), impressed tendency (vasana) and predilections (ruchi), owing to its contact with the non-sentient matter, the seat of the three gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas). This is similar to water, which is cool by itself, acquiring heat and sound, when it gets into a vessel kept on fire. The super-imposed ignorance etc., will, therefore, clear off when the soul is dissociated from the non-sentient matter and its components.

**48—60:** Innumerable are the souls of each of the three categories, referred to above. But then some (the Advaitins) say that there is no distinction among souls and actually, there is only one soul. If this be correct, when one person enjoys pleasure, another should not feel pain. It is, however, seen that, when some enjoy pleasures, others are afflicted by pain and sufferings. The distinction between the souls has, therefore, to be admitted. The argument that the varying experiences are incidental to the assumption of different bodies by the same soul, will not also hold water, seeing that Sage Saubhari who assumed fifty bodies all at once and married fifty princesses did not have such alternating experience simultaneously, despite his ubiquitous appearance in different bodies. If there is no distinction between souls and one and the same soul is manifest in different bodies, one should not be bogged down the throes of Samsara while another attains salvation, one cannot be a teacher imparting instructions and another, a disciple receiving instructions, so on, and so forth, pitted in diametrically opposite situations. Nor could there be such a vast range of unequal creations, a motley crowd as Devas, men, beasts etc., some moulded in felicity and others hurled in misery. Further, the concept of a single soul, that is, oneness of the soul comes into conflict with the scriptures, which declare the multiplicity of souls. Svetasvatara upanishad (VI-13) says that the Lord Who is the Eternal among the eternal, the Intelligent among the intelligent, singly fulfills the desires of the many:—

‘Nityo nityānām, Chetanas Chetanānām, eko bahunām yo vidadhāti Kāmān.’  
(नित्यो नित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान्).

It would not be correct to hold that the scriptures refer only to the differences due to the limiting adjuncts, inasmuch as the differences persist even on the yonder side of heaven, in the state of salvation. Cf. ‘Sada pasyanti Soorayah’ (सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः), the word underlined being in plural number, denoting the numerous beholders of the Lord in heaven. No doubt, so far as the liberated souls are concerned, differences such as those obtaining on this side of



heaven, namely, humans, devas, etc., do not exist; nor are they differentiated by passions like anger, lust, etc. Despite this kind of parity in their essential nature their multiplicity is a pronounced fact, in the same way as that of several gold pots, gems, or grains of rice of the same quality, weight and size. The multiplicity of the individual souls is thus established, both by reasoning and the authority of the scriptures.

**61:** It will be seen from the essential nature of the individual soul, set out in aphorism 4 ante, that there are some features which differentiate the individual soul from Matter and certain others, which differentiate the soul from the Lord. There are also certain features common to (i) the individual soul and Matter and (ii) the individual soul and the Lord. A common characteristic of all the three entities is that they are all eternal. Being controlled and supported by the Lord and being dependent on Him are common to the individual soul and Matter. Bliss, intelligence, being unmanifest to the senses, non-comprehensibility, non-changeability are all properties common to the Lord and the individual soul. The unique attribute of the individual soul, that stamps it out exclusively from the other two entities is, however, its knowledge (gnatrutva) harnessed to dependence (Seshatva) on the Lord. Knowledge is common to both the soul and the Lord, while dependence on the Lord is common to both the soul and Matter. It is only dependence-based or dependence-oriented knowledge that is the characteristic attribute of the soul.

**62—68:** The knowledge possessed by the individual soul is, like its essential nature, an eternal substance, luminous and blissful. The difference between the soul's essential nature and its attributive knowledge is, however, as follows:—

*Essential Nature of the Soul.*

*Knowledge.*

(1) It is the possessor of knowledge as an attribute.

It is an attribute of the soul.

(2) It is incapable of undergoing changes of contraction and expansion.

It is capable of contraction and expansion.

(3) It is self-numinous but does not reveal anything other than itself.

It reveals objects other than itself.

(4) It is atomic in size.

...

(a) It is expansive and infinite in size.

Although (a) above, depicts the natural tendency of knowledge, the actual position is that the knowledge of only some (the ever-free Nityasoorics) remains infinite at all times, the knowledge of the bound souls is not infinite at any time



but very much contracted, while the knowledge of the 'Released' souls (Muktas) is infinite at certain times (*i.e.*), after Liberation from the bondage of Samsara and contracted at other times, that is, in the pre-liberation period.

If knowledge is eternal, as stated a little earlier, how is one to appreciate statements such as 'knowledge has dawned on me' and 'knowledge is extinct'? It needs to be clarified that, on attaining salvation, the knowledge of the individual becomes infinite and is thus capable of comprehending everything (Sarvam ha pasyah pasyati), (Sa chanantyaaya kalpate) सर्वं ह पश्यः पश्यति, स चानन्त्याय कल्पते. But, while in a state of bondage, knowledge gets alternately contracted and expanded, according to the incidence of 'Karma' and its productivity and the nature of comprehension through the sense-organs. The knowledge that is apprehended through the sense-organs, though in effect, one and the same, appears to have different facets, relative to the particular sense-organ employed—seeing, hearing, tasting, etc., and the knowledge of form, sound, taste, respectively, projected thereby.

**69—72:** The attributive knowledge of the soul is treated as a substance because it is (i) the sub-stratum of actions like contraction and expansion, (ii) the sub-stratum of qualities like conjunction and disjunction and (iii) self-luminous (ajada). C.f. 'Kriyasrayo dravyam' (क्रियाश्रयो द्रव्यम्) 'gunasrayo dravyam', (गुणाश्रयो द्रव्यम्) 'gnanam dravyam ajadatvat, yat ajadatvavat tat dravyam'. ज्ञानं द्रव्यम्, अजडत्वात्, यत् अजडत्ववत् तत् द्रव्यम् । Knowledge, though self-luminous (ajada), does not manifest itself during deep slumber, swoon, etc., because there is no scope for it to spread, there being nothing to be comprehended then.

**73—76:** While concluding this section, let us examine why this attributive knowledge is said to be blissful. It is blissful when it reveals the objects comprehended by it. A doubt might instantly arise whether it is so, in all cases, and whether, for example, comprehension of objects like poison, lethal weapons, etc., is not terrifying. This is resolved by pointing out that such a feeling is due to lack of correct perspective on the part of the individual, whose vision is blurred, being bound over by his 'Karma'. He suffers from the illusory notion that the body is the soul and fails to perceive the Lord's immanence in all things that exist—'jagat sarvam sareeram te', (जगत्सर्वं शरीरं ते) 'tani sarvani tad-vapuh' (तानि सर्वाणि तद्वपुः). Due to their association with the Lord, who is the soul of all substances, all of them should naturally be desirable and if, however, they are apprehended differently by different persons, the defect lies not in the things themselves but in the individuals, because of their limitations. But then, it might be asked whether a thing is not desirable by itself, irrespective of its association with the Lord (*e.g.*), Sandal paste, flowers, etc. The answer is: One man's food is another man's poison; the very things, which are relished by an individual, at certain times and in particular places, are eschewed by him at other times and at other places. So then, this is not the natural state of things. All substances



forming the bodies of the Lord are inherently sweet and desirable and, viewed in this correct perspective, knowledge is blissful, when it reveals the objects comprehended by it. This is clearly brought out in the following sloka of Sri Vishnu Purana :

वस्त्वेकमेव दुःखाय सुखायेष्यगिमाय च । कोपाय च यतस्तस्मात् वस्तु वस्त्वात्मकं कुतः ।  
तदेव प्रीतये भूत्वा पुनर्दुःखाय जायते । तदेव कोपाय यतः प्रसादाय च जायते ॥  
तस्माद्दुःखात्मकं नास्ति न च किञ्चित् सुखात्मकम् ॥

Summing up, this section deals with :

- (1) Indispensability of the knowledge of Tattvatraya, the three fundamental truths, to the 'Mumukshu', the aspirant to 'Moksha' (Salvation);
  - (2) The three fundamental truths (principles or entities) namely, (a) Sentient beings (Chit), (b) non-sentient matter (achit) and (c) The Lord (Easvara);
  - (3) The essential nature and attributes of the sentient beings (individual souls);
  - (4) Multiplicity of the individual souls—refutation of the argument that a single soul manifests itself through different bodies;
  - (5) The unique characteristics of the individual soul;
  - (6) Difference between the essential nature of the soul and its attributive knowledge;
  - (7) The three categories of souls and the disparities in their standards of knowledge;
- and (8) Elucidation of the self-luminosity and blissfulness of knowledge.

## SECTION II

### Non-sentient Matter (Achit)

**77—78 :** We now pass on to a study of the characteristics of 'Achit', the non-sentient matter, the second of the three 'Tattvas' or (entities), referred to at the beginning of Section I.

The non-sentient things are totally devoid of knowledge (gnana-soonya) and liable to change of state (vikaraspada), just the antithesis of 'chit' (Sentient Beings), characterised by knowledge and non-changeability. 'Achit' is of three



kinds, namely, 'Pure Sattva', 'Mixed Sattva' and 'Sattva-soonya' (totally devoid of Sattva), that is to say those which are based solely on Sattva (purity), those based on an admixture of all the three gunas (Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) and those that are not linked to any of the three Gunas.

**79—84:** In the first category of things viz. 'Suddha Sattva', or pure Sattva is the supreme Heaven. It is untainted by 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'—c.f. *Rajasah parake, (रजसः पराके) Tamasastu pare, (तमसस्तु पारे) Tamasah paras-tat) (तमसः परस्तात्)*. It is eternal; it is productive of knowledge and bliss; it does not come into being as a result of 'Karma' or actions of the sentient beings and the possessions coveted by them, but is projected solely by the will of the Lord for His enjoyment, in the form of towers and terraces, halls and mansions. Of limitless splendour, far surpassing the brilliance of even the Sun and Fire, it is so vast that it cannot be measured by the Eternally Free (Nitya-soories), the Emancipated Souls (muktas) or even the Lord Himself. It is such a great marvel indeed!

It is self-luminous (ajada), although according to the view of a limited section, it is non-luminous (Jada). Being self-luminous, it manifests itself, unaided by knowledge, to the 'Ever-free' and the Emancipated' souls. It does not, however, manifest itself to the bound souls, still involved in the cycle of birth and death, even as the self-luminous knowledge of the individual souls gets blurred by their deeds (Karma) in the pre-liberation period. The individual souls and their knowledge were both described in Section 1 as self-luminous (ajada), and now, 'Matter', in the first category of 'Pure Sattva' is also said to be self-luminous. And therefore, it becomes necessary to bring out the distinction between this category of Matter and the individual souls and their knowledge. The former (Pure Sattva) does not manifest itself as 'I' and is, therefore, unlike the souls; it evolves into bodies etc., and thus differs from the soul and knowledge: unlike knowledge it projects itself unaided by other objects being the source of sound, touch etc.

**85—118:** The next category is 'Mixed Sattva', known severally as 'Prakriti', 'avidya' or 'maya'. It is 'Sattva' mixed with the other two Gunas, namely 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'. The incidence of 'Rajas' and 'Tamas' is responsible for befogging the individual souls operating as a screen veiling the knowledge and bliss of the bound souls. It is not mere diminution and/or disappearance of knowledge and bliss, but the mischief goes farther, landing the individual soul in perversion of knowledge, arrogating to itself independence, mistaking the body for the soul, covetting the transient worldly pleasures, losing sight of the real and ultimate goal, resorting to means other than the Lord etc. It is eternal, that is to say it is not liable to fluctuations such as appearing at certain times and disappearing thereafter, to reappear. It serves as the Lord's instrument in His sporting activities such as the creation of the universe. It undergoes changes, homogeneous as well as heterogeneous, at different places and



at different times—homogeneous, for example, when there is no preponderance of any one Guna (attribute) over the other two and in the subtle (Sookshma) State, when there is no distinction of name and forms and heterogeneous when the milieu changes into a gross (sthoola) state involving the distinction of names and forms and the fluctuating tempo of the Gunas—the different times, alluded to, are the point of time at which creation took place and again that at which dissolution comes about.

This is called 'Prakriti' or unmodified cause, because it produces several changes of state—with its three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas); these follow the seven principles, namely, mahat, ahankara, the subtle matter (tanmatra) of sound, the subtle matter of touch, colour, taste, and smell. It is also known as 'avidya', or ignorance, veiling knowledge. It is called 'maya', or wonder, as it produces a wonderful variety (i.e) variegated forms of creation. This misra-Sattva comprises twenty four principles as enumerated in Thiruvoimozhi X-7-8.\* These are:—the five potent objects of sense, the five sense-organs the five elements, prakriti, mahat, ahankara and manas (mind). Of these, the first principle is 'prakriti' otherwise known as 'Pradhana' or 'avyakta'. Prakriti has already been defined, 'Pradhana' means the primary instrument of the Lord's sporting activities. 'Avyakta' means that the difference in its attributes is not distinctly discernable in that subtle state. It stands possessed of the States known as 'avibhakta-tamas', 'vibhakta-tamas' and 'akshara'. The state obtaining at the time of dissolution of the universe is referred to as 'avibhakta-tamas', that is, there is no scope then for differentiation by name and form. When the Lord resolves to create the universe, there is 'vibhakta-tamas' or differentiation of things by name and form. By 'akshara' is meant that situation when the individual souls, in their subtle state, are seen promiscuously mixed up with matter, like unto seed drenched with water, about to disintegrate.

From 'Prakriti', the aforesaid modifications, namely, 'mahat' etc., arise, through inequalities among the three gunas (attributes). The Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas constitute attributes. Even so, they are not distinguishable in the subtle State of (moola) prakriti when they maintain parity among themselves, but are clearly manifest in the gross state, when the said parity is disturbed and changes of state are undergone. In the differentiated state, the essential nature of these three attributes has to be gauged from the physical effect each one produces as well as their psychological and moral correlates. Thus 'Sattva' is known to produce knowledge and bliss and to promote contacts with both, and an abiding love for them. 'Rajas' engenders sexual desire and attachment to the sense objects. 'Tamas' lands one in perverse knowledge, inattentiveness, indolence and sleep (inactivity). When these attributes were in equal proportions, 'Pra-

\* பொங்கைகம்புலனும் பொறியைந்தும் கருமேந்திரியமைம்பூத  
மிங்கிவ்வுயிரேய் பிரகிருதி மாணங்கார மனங்களே.



'kriti' was also in an unmodified state without distinction of name and form, and the attributes were not manifest. On the other hand, when they are in unequal proportions, 'Prakriti', as already stated, undergoes modifications and the attributes become manifest to perception and inference. Of the transformations, which the inequalities among the three attributes produce, 'Mahat' or the Great principle, comes first. This again is of three kinds, namely, Sattvika, Rajasa and Tamasa. 'Mahat' or 'buddhi' is the medium through which the individual cognises the external world and it produces in him the power of determination with a bias, dictated by the inequalities of the attributes. From this (mahat) arise the 'ahankara' or egotism, which, in turn, is of three kinds (viz.) 'vaikarika', 'taijasa', and 'bhootadi', depending upon the spell of the particular guna (attribute). 'Ahankara' is responsible for attachment to one's body etc. From 'vaikarika', with its 'sattvic' bias eleven organs are produced. These are the five sensory organs, consisting of the ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose, the five motor organs comprising speech, hands, legs, the organs of procreation and the organs of excretion and 'manas' (the faculty of attention).

From 'bhootadi', the type of 'ahankara' with its bias in 'tamas', is generated the subtle base (tanmatra) of sound. From the subtle base of sound arise the spatial ether (akasa) and the subtle base of touch. From this latter subtle base arise 'Air' (vayu) and the subtle base of colour and form. And from this base emerge 'fire' (agni) and the subtle base of taste. From the subtle base of taste spring up water and the subtle base of odour. From this subtle base of odour results the Earth (prithivi) whose characteristic is smell.

On, the four subtle bases (tanmatras) beginning from the subtle base of touch are the effects produced by the four elements beginning with the spatial ether and are the causes that produce the four elements beginning with 'Air'. Putting it more lucidly, from the subtle base of 'Sound' is born the element of spatial ether; from this element arises the subtle base of touch, from which again comes the element of air; from the element of air arises the subtle base of colour and form, from which springs the element of fire; from the element of fire emerges the subtle base of taste, which, in turn, gives rise to the element of water; from the element of water evolves the subtle base of odour which again gives birth to Earth (Prithvi). The 'tanmatras' (subtle bases) are the subtle states of the Elements. Unlike the Elements, which exhibit certain distinct characteristics, the tanmatras have no such characteristics and are, therefore, 'avishesha' or non-descript. The characteristics of Earth and Water are gentleness or agreeableness (Santatva), those of Fire and Air ferocity (ghoratva) which is disagreeable, while the fifth element 'Akasa' (spatial ether) is inert or indifferent (moodha). When these elements combine there ensues a combination of all these characteristics.

The 'ahankara' of the 'taijasa' variety, with its Rajasic bias serves as an



auxiliary to the other two types of 'ahankara,' during their operation, like water helping the germination of the seed and the wind fanning the flame.

The 'ahankara' of the Sattvik type created the five sensory organs, as follows:—with the aid of the subtle base of sound, the Ear is created; with the aid of the subtle base of touch is created the Skin and the Eye, Tongue and Nose are likewise created with the aid of the respective subtle bases, namely colour and form, taste and odour. And then the five motor organs are evolved, speech with the aid of Ear, hands with the aid of skin, legs with the aid of 'Eye' the genital organ with the aid of the Tongue and the organ of excretion with the aid of Nose. 'Manas' (mind) which is auxiliary to all these ten organs is, it is stated, created by this 'ahankara' itself without any other aid. Some (like the Naiyayikas) hold that the elements themselves produce some of the sensory organs. They say that the sensory organ of 'smell' is produced from the element 'Earth' and so on. This, however, runs counter to what has been stated in the scriptures, namely, the elements are only their nourishing support and nothing more.

Having set out in the foregoing paragraphs the manner in which the principles of 'Mahat' etc., came into being, we will now proceed to examine how the Lord makes use of these, in His activities such as creation of the universe etc. Without a combination of all these, effects are not produced. A wall is built out of the aggregate formed by mixing clay, sand and water. Likewise, the Lord mixes all these forces and creates the egg-shaped universe and in it, creates the four-faced Brahma. Dwelling in the heart of the four-faced Brahma and other individual souls, the Lord, as the internal, controller or Ruler of all souls helps to foster the requisite knowledge and resolution in them to create a vast multitude of things. Thus, after the creation of the elements, they are combined together to create the egg-shaped universe. Brahma, the demi-urge is also created by the Lord and put into the universe. Brahma creates the minor deities, men, animals etc., and the all-pervading Lord watches them all as the Internal Ruler of all souls.

There are several egg-shaped universes. Each one of them comprises fourteen worlds, seven lower and seven upper worlds surrounded by seven fortifications (avaranas). The seven lower worlds inhabited by Daityas, Danavas, Pannagas, Suparnas, etc., are *Atala*, *Vitala*, *Nitala*, *Talatala*, *Mahata'a*, *Sutala* and *Patala*, while the seven upper worlds are *Bhooloka*, (occupied by humans) *Bhuvarloka* (inhabited by Gandharvas), *Suvarloka* (the region of planets, Stars, Indra in power etc.), *Maharloka* (the seat of residence of dethroned Indra and others awaiting reinstatement in power and others), *Janaloka* (the abode of Prajapatis) *Tapoloka* (the abode of Prajapathis) and *Satyaloaka* (the residence of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva and their votaries, who through propitiation of their Deities got a life over there). The seven coverings (fortifications) of progressively increasing dimensions are: Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Ahankara, Mahat and Avyakta. They are unto God, like sporting accessories (balls) to play with.



Like water-bubbles seen in a vast expanse of water, all these were created all at once (simultaneously) unlike the structures built, brick by brick.

The *elements* : 'Akasa', the spatial ether provides space for staying and moving about; 'Vayu', air is the medium wafting across fragrance etc; 'Tejas, fire for cooking (heating and lighting); Jala', water for wetting (cementing and cooling); and 'Prithivi', earth for supporting.

The *organs* : The sensory organs of Ear, Skin, Eye, Tongue and Nose apprehend sound, tactual sensations, colour and form, taste and smell, respectively. Of the five motor organs of action, the organ of speech is used for speaking, the hand for making things, the leg for walking, the genital organ and the organ for excretion for excretory functions. Manas (Mind) is common to all these activities, as all these function only, when co-ordinated by the Mind.

The *attributes of the elements* : The sense objects of sound etc. are the characteristic attributes of the five elements. The attribute of 'spatial ether' is sound, that of 'air' is touch, of 'fire' is colour and form, of 'water' is taste, and of the 'earth' is odour.

Perception of the attributes of one element in the other elements as well is due to the process known as 'Pancheekarana, or five-fold combination, the blending of the elements in certain specified proportions. Each element is compounded of half of itself and half of the four other elements in equal proportions. Thus, for example, the element known as 'Prithivi' or Earth is made up of fifty percent of earth, the remaining half being made up of one-eighth each of the other four elements. The spatial ether, by itself too subtle to be visible, however, appears dark because of this five-fold combination. The dark colour is actually a characteristic of Earth—Yat Krishnam tat prithivi (यत् कृष्णं तत् पृथिवी). It is also said that the succeeding subtle bases (Tanmatras) combine with the preceding subtle bases and hence additional features are present in the succeeding bases. That is how 'spatial ether' has only 'sound' as its attribute, 'air' has two attributes, namely, sound and touch, 'fire' has sound, touch and form, 'water' has all these three qualities, besides taste, while 'earth' has smell in addition to all the other four qualities.

**119:** The third category of non-sentient matter is 'Sattva-soonya' or that which is devoid of Sattva and the other two attributes, namely, 'Rajas' and 'Tamas'. The word 'Sattva' here stands for all the three attributes. Under this comes 'Time'. It is the cause of the various transformations of 'Prakriti' and its evolutes in the sense that the Lord carries out the functions of creation and dissolution at specified times. Further all changes in the material world are time-regulated and/or conditioned by time. It is sub-divided into Kala and Kashtha, the latter being equal to 15 twinklings of the eye and the former is the equivalent.



of 30 Kashthas; 30 kalas = one muhoorta, 30 muhoortas = one day, 30 days = one month, 2 months = Ritu or season, 3 Ritus = one ayana, 2 ayanas = one year and so on, *vide* division and sub-divisions of Time indicated by Parasara Bhagavan in Sri Vishnu Purana. Time is eternal. It is a helpful instrument for the sport of the Lord and is in the position of a body for Him.

The other two categories of 'Achit', discussed earlier, namely 'Pure Sattva' and 'mixed Sattva' are objects of enjoyment, instruments necessary for such enjoyment and places of enjoyment, for the Lord and the individual souls (bhogya, bhogopakarana, and bhogasthana). In so far as the Heaven (Nitya vibhooti) is concerned, the objects of enjoyment are divine sounds, forms, etc.; the instruments of enjoyment are the celestial things such as ornaments, fans and parasols, the places of enjoyment are the towers and terraces, halls and mansions of supernal splendour. This side of Heaven, the objects of enjoyment for the individual souls are those apprehended by the sense-organs; the instruments necessary for such enjoyment are the sense-organs, the eye, etc.; the places of enjoyment are all the fourteen worlds and the several bodies of various kinds. And for the Lord the Milky ocean, where He reclines, which is, as it were, the spring board for His incarnations (Avatars), His Avatars and Iconic manifestations are the objects, instruments and places of enjoyment, this side of the Heaven, known as (Leela Vibhooti).

'Pure Sattva' is bounded by the Mixed 'Sattva' below, and the latter by the former above; the last category, 'Time' has no such boundaries and thus exists everywhere. Some hold that 'Time' is eternal only in the High Heaven (Nitya Vibhooti) and non-eternal here. Some (the Buddhists) altogether deny the existence of 'Time'. But this is refuted, being opposed to (i) perception and experience, which reveal all things mobile as well as immobile, time-bound and (ii) scriptures—the jyotisha (astrology) one of the six adjuncts of Vedas, rests solely on 'Time', which is its very life-line.

The 'Vaiseshikas' and others mention that there is a separate substance called 'Direction'. This is also not correct as (i) direction falls within the ambit of 'akasa' the spatial ether and 'Prithivi' (Earth); (ii) direction is not absolute, being relative to the observer and thus ceases to be a 'distinct' substance by itself and (iii) direction is determined by the relative position of the Sun and Earth, East and West being the conventional directions where the sun is said to rise and set. Thus, 'direction' stands included in the spatial ether and Earth.

Some (Buddhists) say that 'akasa' (spatial ether, unlike the other elements 'Prithvi', etc., is not something concrete and positive, but is merely the absence of the covering or barrier (avarana). According to them it is nothing more than a mere expression, incapable of direct preception. This again is incorrect, as spatial ether has a positive form as denoted by the observations: 'The hawk flies here',



'The eagle flies over there' and so on. Some others (the Naiyayikas and Vaiseshikas) hold that 'akasa' is eternal, without components, all-pervading and invisible. This theory is not acceptable. As spatial ether is the off-shoot of the 'tamasa' variety of ahankara, known as 'bhootadi', it cannot be eternal. As it is itself a component of 'bhootadi', there is no question of its being without parts. It is not all-pervading as it is not found in the other two types of 'ahankaras'. As it has a form, due to the five-fold combination of the elements, as already explained and is thus visible, it is not correct to say that it is imperceptible. Again, the view advanced by these schools that 'Air' (vayu) is imperceptible is also fallacious, as the tactual sense experiences the presence and impact of air.

There are several varieties of 'Fire', fire, light, etc., being the earthly variety, the celestial variety like the Sun, the gastric variety and that which is found in Gold. The solar fire is everlasting while the earthly fire, light, etc., are impermanent. The natural colour of 'fire' is red and it is hot for the touch. Water is of white colour (natural colour) cold for the touch and is sweet. The earth has forms and tastes of various kinds. Earth and Air are neither hot nor cold to touch.

### SECTION III

#### (Easvara Prakarana or Section on the Lord)

In this Section, we deal with the essential nature and attributes of Easvara', (the Lord), who controls the other two entities dwelt upon at length, in the two preceding chapters.

**141—143 :** Free from all evils and imperfections, which afflict all other beings, and adorned by a host of auspicious attributes, the Lord is characterised by Supreme bliss and knowledge. He is infinite, possesses knowledge (gnana), power (sakti), strength (bala), sovereignty (ayisvaryya), valour (veerya), dazzling splendour (tejas), mercy (daya) and tender solicitude (vatsalya). He creates, sustains and dissolves the worlds. He is the object of worship by the four types of persons, namely the sorrow-stricken, the cravers of worldly pleasures (wealth and power), the seeker of knowledge of self-realisation as distinguished from God-realisation, and the man of wisdom, who out of unbounded love for the Lord does not brook separation from Him. He is the sole Granter of the four highest values, sought after by individual souls—dharma (righteousness) 'arttha' (wealth), 'kama' (fulfilment of desires), and 'Moksha' (salvation). Possessor of a haloed personality, very distinct from all else, He is the loving consort of Sridevi (Maha Lakhshmi), Bhodevi and Neeladevi.

He is '*akhila-heya-pratyaneeka*', that is, He stands diametrically opposed to all evils and imperfections and is inaccessible to defects of transformations,



ncrease or decrease of knowledge etc., like lamp unto darkness and the white-necked eagle (Garuda) unto snakes. He is 'Ananta', that is, He is Eternal and immeasurable in terms of 'time', 'territory' and 'things'. It is not as if He exists in one region and not in another, is at one time and not at another. Not being circumscribed by Time and Space, He pervades all sentient and non-sentient beings as the Internal Ruler of all.

**144—145:** If the Lord does not keep aloof from the sentient and non-sentient beings, but pervades them and stays inside them, will not their imperfections stick to Him? No, they will not, because the reason for his entry into the body is not the same as that which made the individual soul enter it. Whereas the individual soul enters a particular body, as a result of his Karma or past actions, the Lord enters it as a matter of grace (anugraha). Even though the states of childhood, youth etc., pertain to the body, with its growth and decay, and not to the individual soul, the latter reaps the fruits of his Karma and suffers pain and perversion, by virtue of his association with the body. The Lord is not so affected, as He is not bound by Karma and its consequences.

**146—147:** The Lord is 'Gnananandaika-Swaroopa', (i.e.,) He possesses knowledge of the form of bliss. It is self-luminous knowledge, which is favourable throughout and hence blissful.

**148:** His essential nature, being blissful and self-luminous knowledge, the auspicious attributes which flow therefrom are now dwelt upon. The Lord's attributes of knowledge, power, strength, sovereignty, valour, splendour, mercy, tender solicitude, easy accessibility, condescension, softness, straightforwardness etc., are eternal, unlimited, innumerable, devoid of limiting adjuncts, flawless, peerless and unsurpassing.

**149:** The aforesaid qualities, could be brought under three broad groups, namely, (i) 'vatsalya', or tender solicitude like unto mother's love, condescension, easy accessibility, softness and straightforwardness etc., (ii) 'Saurya', (i.e.) valour, aggression etc., and (iii) 'Gnana, Sakti etc., (i.e.,) knowledge, power, strength etc. Of these, the qualities comprised in the first group are displayed towards the friendly (i.e.) the devotees or God-bound souls, the second group qualities are directed against the enemies or the ungodly, while the qualities in the last group which are, as it were, the fountain sources from which the qualities comprised in the other two groups are derived, are applicable to all.

**150:** Apart from the above broad classification, the individual scope of some of the Lord's attributes is now indicated.

The Lord's 'knowledge' (gnana) is for the benefit of the ignorant.

The Lord's 'power' (Sakti) is for the benefit of the weak.

The Lord's 'Mercy' (Daya) is for the benefit of miscreants.



The Lord's 'Tender Solicitude' (vatsalya) is for the benefit of the sinful.

The Lord's 'Condescension' (Sauseelya) is for the benefit of the lowly.

The Lord's 'Straitforwardness' (Arjava) is for the benefit of the crooked.

The Lord's 'Friendliness' (Sauharda) is for the benefit of the hard-hearted.

The Lord's 'Softness' (mardava) is for the benefit of those afraid of separation from Him.

The Lord's 'Easy accessibility' (Saulabya) is for the benefit of those who pine for his darsan.

This is just by way of illustrating how each one of the Lord's several auspicious traits could be helpful to the individual souls. Those who would otherwise be inclined to be scared away from the Lord, in view of His paramountcy (Paratva and sovereignty) can draw solace from His saulabya (easy accessibility). Those, who look upon themselves hard-hearted can be heartened by His friendliness and so on.

**151:** And now we see how these auspicious qualities are exercised by the Lord in relation to His devotees. Being merciful, He is moved by the sufferings of others and pities them; His friendliness keeps Him well disposed to His devotees always. As one who subserves his devotees, He gives of Himself to them like the moonlight, the cool southerly breeze, sandal paste and water unto their beneficiaries. Being impartial, He rises above considerations of high and low, as regards birth, attainment of knowledge, manner of living, conduct etc. among His devotees. As one, who protects even those who do not seek His protection, He becomes the sole refuge of the destitutes who, as a matter of fact, have none else to fall back upon. As one, who truly fulfils all the wishes of His devotees, He performs the rare feat of restoring to Sandipini, His preceptor, during His incarnation as Krishna, his son killed at sea long back and reclaiming from the celestium and restoring to a Brahmin of Dvaraka all his four sons whom he had lost as soon as they were born. As a 'Satya-Sankalpa', the maker of solemn Resolve, He gave Dhruva, the young lad, the boon of ruling at the end of his life on Earth, over a region (pole-star), which he set up anew in the upper region of Swarga,

He gifts away Himself and all His possessions to His devotees for unrestricted use, in the same way as one enjoys one's own properties. This bespeaks *His Grace galore*. When the desires of His devotees are fulfilled, He feels satisfied as if they were His own achievements. *This is how His trait known as 'Krititva' operates.*

He keeps remembering always the mere gesture of His devotees in seeking refuge in Him, but never thinks of the benefits continually bestowed on them, by



Him. This reveals His keen sense of gratitude (*kritajnata*). Described by the scriptures as 'Rasa' or bliss, the Lord is sweet, in all states, so as to wean His devotees away from the material pleasures, to which they have been addicted from time immemorial. *This is characteristic of His 'Madhurya' or sweetness.* His 'Chaturya', (cleverness) helps to shelter the faults of His devotees, like the man who is tactful enough to appear indifferent to the lapses of his wife and sons. So firm is His hold on the devotees on account of His attribute known as 'Sthairya', that He opposes even His most beloved consort, Maha Lakshmi, when she points an accusing figure at His devotees and defends them firmly. Like the intoxicated lover, who relishes his lady-love with all her dirt, the Lord lovingly accepts His devotees with all their blemishes, incidental to their material associations. As a result of His straight-forwardness, he sincerely works, by word, deed and thought, for the uplift of His devotees, like one who pumps water up to highlands.

The grief of His devotees over separation from Him dwindles down to such minute proportions, in comparison to His own over their separation, as between water contained in the hoof-mark of a cow and the vast ocean. This brings into focus the Lord's 'mardava' (softness). By virtue of His easy accessibility (*saulabhya*) and condescension (*Sauseelya*), he descends to the level of His devotees from His high pedestal and makes Himself pliable for mixing with them all freely, even to the extent of their tying Him with a rope and beating Him (c.f. Sri Bhagavata-boyhood days of Sri Krishna). So great is His attachment to His new-found devotees, that He would befriend them even to the exclusion of Maha Lakshmi and the 'Nitya Soories'. This can be likened to the cow, which fondles its new-born calf, while attacking, with its horns and hooves, the elder progeny, as well as those who bring her fodder. This, in a nutshell, is His rare trait of 'vatsalya', tender solicitude.

**152—159:** The Lord constitutes the cause for the emergence of the entire universe. Some (Buddhists, Jains and Vaiseshikas) look upon atoms as the cause of the worlds. This is, however, at variance with the scriptures, apart from that atoms are not proved by perception or inference. The Sankhyas (followers of Kapila faith) hold that 'Pradhana' or primordial matter is the cause of the worlds. Even as mud is the cause of the earthen pot, the universe moulded by the three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) with its cloak of pain, pleasures and allurements, should have, according to them, emanated from 'Pradhana', the unmodified cause of the three Gunas. This, however, cannot be the case, as 'Pradhana' is non-sentient and cannot undergo changes of state, except when presided over by the Lord and creation and dissolution are regulated by Him. By a process of elimination we come on to the other entity, namely, the sentient being. Could a sentient being be the cause of the worlds? No, he cannot, being bound by Karma and consequently involved in grief. Brahma and Indra too, fall under the category of sentient beings, as defined here, and creation of the universe can not vest in them. So then, creation of the universe is possible only by the Lord, who is omniscient, omnipotent, full of bliss and unfettered by Karma.



**160—171:** The Lord is the supreme cause of creation of the universe, acting out of His own free will, unlike the lower order of creation of man and animals by other men and animals through 'karma' and nescience, and by Brahma, under the orders of the Lord. Being done out of His sankalpa or will, creation is effortless and does not involve any fatigue incidental to physical effort. The sole purpose behind this creation is the Lord's love of sport, 'Lokavatthu leela-kaivalyam' (लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम्), like a game of dice or chess, indulged in by the Princes, as a pastime, or castles built of sand by the little ones, as a matter of play. No doubt, creation is meant to provide repeated opportunities to the individual souls, through a process of purification, trials and tribulations, being the cathartic agents. But then the all-powerful Lord, all Whose wishes are fulfilled, can as well elevate them all at one stroke, instead of leaving them to plod through tears and toils and stand or fall by their 'Karma' vis-a-vis the Sastraic injunctions. If the latter course was not adopted by Him, it was out of His love of the Sport, the spontaneous joyous creative activity. Therefore it is, these worlds are known as the Lord's 'Leela Vibhooti' or the arena of His sport. But then, it might be asked whether His sport does not get spoiled by dissolution of the universe (samhara). Well, dissolution is part of the sport, even as creation of sand houses and destruction thereof by the boys during play time are but different stages of the play.

As the Lord transforms Himself into the worlds of forms and names, He is the material cause of the universe, just like mud for pot, cotton for cloth and so on. The Lord is the instrumental cause like the potter for the pots, weaver for the cloth etc. When the period of the great 'Pralaya' draws to its close, the Lord, remembering the constitution of the worlds prior to 'pralaya' and at His volition (samkalpa) of 'May I become manifold', separates into its constituent elements the whole mass of (the enjoying souls and objects of enjoyment). The Lord is also the operative cause, His Gnana (knowledge), Sakti (power) etc. being analogous to the potter's wheel and staff, the weaver's woof, bobbins and treadle etc. The Lord is thus not merely the instrumental cause, but also the material and operative cause of the universe. By His transformation into the world of men and matter, is meant His immanence as the internal controller of all, revealing the underlying unity of Brahman, qualified by the sentient and non-sentient things. He is thus the 'Viseshya' or substance present in all things qualified by the 'Viseshana' or attributes, namely, sentient and non-sentient beings. While the attributes or modes undergo transformations, the 'Viseshya' undergoes no changes and is 'Nirvikara', His essential nature, as described in the foregoing aphorisms, undergoing no modification whatsoever. The Lord's evolutionary transformation, as above, can be appreciated from the well-known analogy of the spider, mentioned in the scriptures. The spider weaves the cob-web without impairing its own essential nature and is the material cause of the cob-web. So is the Lord in relation to the universe.



He does not undergo modifications, but His inseparable attribute of body comprising matter and the individual souls does. Creation actually means that He makes the non-sentient undergo the changes of state and endows the individual souls with bodies and sense-organs, thus providing the necessary scope for expansion of their knowledge.

**172:** Of the three-fold dispensation of Creation, sustentation and destruction (dissolution), creation has thus far been dealt with. And now, by the Lord's sustentation of the world is underlined His protection of the created things, by entering them all beneficially, like a column of water sustaining the crops.

**173:** The last stage, namely, destruction (samhara) is the destruction of the sense-organs, misused for sensual enjoyment. The dissolution of the worlds is also a gesture of the Lord's grace, as it prevents further sinning by the individual souls, who have prostituted, for the uninhibited enjoyment of sensual pleasures, the sense-organs endowed by the Lord for their redemption. This is like unto a father keeping in fetters, his wayward and disobedient son, by way of reforming him.

**174—177:** Each of the aforesaid creation, protection and dissolution is of four kinds. When He creates the worlds, He is possessed of the attribute known as 'Rajas' and remains as the Internal controller (antaryami) of (1) Brahma, the creator of the fourteen worlds, (2) the ten Prajapatis, created by Brahma to assist him in the work of creation, (3) Time, which sets the pace for creation and (4) the several sentient beings; while extending protection, (i) He incarnates as Vishnu and thereafter assumes several forms to suit the purpose of His incarnations, from time to time, (ii) propagates through sages Manu, Yagnavalkya, Parasara, Valmiki, Saunaka etc., the study of scriptures and Puranas, thereby revealing the path of good conduct, (iii) remains the internal controller of 'time' as well as all beings which are mutually dependent, and (iv) protects them all, animated by the attribute of 'Sattva'.

At the time of destruction, He remains as the Internal Controller of Rudra, Agni, Yama and other agents who help the Lord in the final dissolution of the Universe, as well as of 'Time' and all beings, impelled by the attribute of 'Tamas', which aids unrelenting destruction.

**178—179:** A doubt might arise whether the disparities in the created things, some being happy and others sorrowful, will not render the Lord guilty of partiality and cruelty. Such charges cannot, however, be laid at His door, because He creates only on the basis of the Karma of the individuals and with an eye on their welfare, like unto a mother who inflicts a deterrent punishment on the young one, indulging in the unhealthy habit of swallowing mud. The inequalities are the direct results of the actions of individual souls and their sufferings are intended to chasten them and cure their ills through a cleansing process.



**180:** It is not a formless and colourless Lord, who creates the worlds abounding in a vast variety of colours and forms, but the Lord associated with a form, who does it. c.f. Nammazhvar's Thiruvoimozhi II-2-1. (முந்தீர் குலம் படைத்த எம் முகில் வண்ணனே!), wherein he refers to the cloud-hued Lord having created the world, surrounded by oceanic waters.

**181:** As between the Lord's form (Divya-mangala-vigraha) and His essential nature (Divya-atma swaroopa), the former is far more delectable than the latter, being an inexhaustible fountain of bliss. Admirably suited to Him, it is eternal, like His essential nature and of unique grandeur. Being aprakrita (transcendent), it is made up of pure 'Sattva'. It illuminates the Lord's divine nature within, like unto gold kept in a small casket of translucent ruby. This is in dire contrast to the bodies of sentient beings, which serve to dwarf and conceal their essential nature. Of limitless splendour, it is the seat of a large array of auspicious qualities such as tender softness, exquisite beauty, natural aroma, etc., and the object of constant meditation by Yogins. With its intoxicating charm, it attracts to itself one and all, besides creating a positive distaste and aversion in the minds of the individual souls to everything else. It is the object of perennial enjoyment by the eternally free (nitya soories) and the emancipated souls in Heaven, who drink deep of the nectarine beauty of the Lord's Divine person. It is refreshing like the fragrance of a lotus pond, rooting out pain and fatigue. It is the base for the Lord's numerous incarnations. Protector of all, it is the resort of all here, there, and everywhere and is adorned by an array of jewels and decorative weapons.

**182:** And now we come on to the five-fold form or manifestation of the Lord, namely, Para, Vyuha, Vibhava, Antaryami and Arcchavatara. (These five manifestations are referred to in Thiruvoimozhi VI-9-5).<sup>\*</sup> The first-named, (i.e.), 'Paratva' or transcendental form, refers to the state of the Lord in the celestium (High Heavens), the land of unalloyed, unlimited and everlasting bliss, beyond the mischief of Time, in a glorious setting surrounded by the Ever-free and emancipated souls, lustrous and charming, drinking deep of His insatiable nectarine form. 'Vyuha' is the operative form of the Lord, (i.e.), the galaxy of Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, for the purpose of creation, protection and destruction of the worlds, the seat of operation shifting from the High Heavens the milky ocean, literally within the ear-shot of the ardent devotees crying out their immediate deliverance from the worldly ills and evils. In this state, Lord also extends His Grace to all other categories of sentient beings as well, worship and meditate on Him.

In the transcendental (Para) state, all the six chief attributes of the Lord, (i.e.), vledge, power, etc., (already dealt with, in detail) are in their full complement,

\* விண்மீதிருப்பாய் மலைமேல் நிற்பாய் கடல் சேர்ப்பாய்  
மண்மீதுழல்வாய் இவற்றுளெங்கும் மறைந்துறைவாய்.



while in the 'Vyuha' state, only two of these six attributes will be dominant in each of the three forms of Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. In the Sankarshana form, the attributes of knowledge (Gnana) and sustaining power (Bala) are pronounced, so as to preside over the individual souls, and segregate them, at the time of creation, from the non-sentient matter with which they lay mixed up unrecognisably. Thereafter, passing into the state of Pradyumna, He disseminates the Sastras (Vedas, etc.), and is also eventually responsible for the dissolution of the world. Pradyumna possesses, for discharging these functions, the attributes of Sovereignty (Ayisvarya) and valour (Veerya). He presides over the Mind (manas) and preaches 'Dharma', or virtuous conduct as stipulated in the Sastras. He also creates what is described in the Vishvakshena Samhita as the group of pure souls, beginning with the four Manus or the four couples of four different castes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras, who emerged from His face, shoulders thighs and feet respectively. The pure souls are those God-centred souls strictly conforming to the scriptural code of conduct, serving the Lord lovingly, seeking no personal gains and pleasures and ultimately attaining to the Lord.

Aniruddha, though possessed of all the attributes invokes the qualities of Power or Energy (Sakti) and splendour (Tejas) to suit His functional activities, namely, sustentation of the Universe, propagation of the right type of knowledge to enable the individual souls to attain salvation, creation of 'Time' and of the group known as 'mixed souls'. The 'mixed souls' as distinguished from the 'Pure souls', referred to earlier, are those born in the different castes, dominated by the attribute of 'Rajas', ritualistic, straying away into the worship of lesser gods and denunciation of the Supreme Lord, treading the path of desire and fulfilment, seeking enjoyment of ephemeral pleasures either in 'Swarga' or in the lower worlds and thereby getting involved in the cycle of birth and rebirth.

'Vibhava' or the incarnate forms of the Lord are infinite in number, with this difference that some of them are primary (mukhya) while the others are only secondary, (gowna). The primary avatars like Rama, Krishna (in human forms), Fish, Tortoise, etc., (in sub-human forms), the dwarf mango tree in Dandakaranya (immobile plant), etc, arose through the Lord's will. Likewise, the secondary avatars also came off through His will only, but these neither partake of His essential nature nor are associated with His supernal form (aprakrita-divya-mangala-vigraha). To the 'mumukshu' or aspirant for salvation, only 'mukhya' (Primary) avatars are the objects of meditation and worship, as alone possess all the glories of the Lord's essential nature and have their basis in the Lord's transcendent form, like lights lit up from the original lamp. On the other hand, the forms of Brahma, Siva, Agni, Varuna, Vyasa, Jamada, Parasurama, Arjuna (Kartaveerya as well as Pandava) Kubera, etc., are secondary manifestations of the Lord, where He merely presides over a form which has egoism, are not proper forms of meditation for the aspirants to Moksha.



These forms, if worshipped, will not be helpful to those aspiring for salvation, as the Lord merely acts through these individual souls, who derive special strength and power to carry out certain divine purposes through His special impact on them.

And then, there are certain distinguishing characteristics between the Lord's manifestations of 'Para' 'Vyuha' etc., and even among His primary (important) avatars, such as the differences between 'Nityodita' (perpetual rising) states of 'Para Vasudeva' worshipped by the Ever-free and emancipated souls in the transcendental region (Heaven) and the 'Vyuha Vasudeva', said to be in 'Santodita' state. Then there are the four-fold distinctions of waking, dreaming, sleeping and transcendental meditation in the forms Vyuha; the twelve well-known forms of Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda etc., viewed as located in different parts of the body, forehead etc., the thirty six incarnations beginning with 'Padmanabha' (mentioned in Vishvaksena Samhita); the specific incarnations of Upendra, Trivikrama, Dadhibhakta, who gave nectar to Indra, Hayagriva, Nara, Narayana, Hari, Krishna, Matsya, Koorma, Varaha etc., Their hands, weapons, complexions, places of residence etc.

These are all found in the Pancharatra and other texts, which are, however, not dealt with here for two reasons, namely, (i) they are not easy to grasp and (ii) what is even more important, they are held as most secret, being the secrets pertaining to the Lord's incarnations (avatara-rahasyas).

The cause of incarnation, as already stated is the Lord's free will or 'Sankalpa'. The objectives are three-fold (i.e.) protection of the good, destruction of the wicked and resuscitation of righteousness, 'Paritranaya sadhunam, vinasayacha Dushkritam, dharma-samasthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge-yuge' (Bhagavad Gita IV 9)\* In the authoritative Itihasas and Puranas, it has no doubt been stated that the Avatars took place as a result of the curse laid by Sage Bhrigu and others. And yet, there is no involvement of Karma in the Lord's incarnation, for the curse etc. is just a pretext and not the cause which, it may be reiterated, is His 'Iccha' or free will.

The next aspect of the Lord, 'Antaryamitva', signifies (1) His pervading to the individual self form within through His essential nature and (2) the entry of His supernal form into the region of every one's heart, everywhere, be it Swarga or the Hell, so as to be the internal Controller of all, the friend of all sentient beings, who all stages. By entering with His form, holy and auspicious, inside each, He affects them and is meditated upon, as and when the love of Lord dawns on the individual. The Lord's stay in the lotus-like heart of the individual is as a known man, befitting His characteristic role as Narayana.

\* परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मं संस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥



The fifth aspect, the 'Arccha' form is the iconic manifestation of the Lord, a perfect combination of (1) appetiser (inducing love for Him in the hearts of the individual souls, by making Himself visible to one and all and attracting them by His exquisite and exhilarating form), (2) easy refuge of all and (3) a great draw, the embodiment of every conceivable object of enjoyment, extremely attractive and all-absorbing. Put in a nutshell, the 'Arccha' form consists in the images of the Lord, which accommodate themselves to the various tastes of the creatures, their worship having no fixed form, but that which the worshipper may choose and desire to have of Him. (c f. Poigai Azhvar's First Thiruvandadi, 44): (தமருகத்தெவ்வுருவம் அவ்வுருவம் தானே) having no fixed name, but that by which the worshipper may choose to call Him by; all-knowing but seeming as if not knowing; all-powerful but seeming as if powerless; all-sufficient but seeming as if needy, thus seeming to transpose His true nature as Master of all, and exchange places between the worshipped and the worshipper and choosing to be occularly manifest in temples and homes, at all places and at all times desired, unlike the incarnations which are confined to certain places and certain periods only. Worship of an Image is not different from the worship of the Supreme Lord, Who not only pervades the image through His all-pervading power but, by virtue of His extraordinary attribute of 'Saulabhya', makes it His special abode, according to the worshippers' wish, so as to be within their easy reach.

*Blessed be the holy feet of Pillai Lokacharya.*

*Blessed be the holy feet of Srimad Vara Vara Muni.*

Thus ends Ttvatraya.

लोकगुरुं गुरुमिस्सह पूर्वेः कूरकुलोत्तम दासमुदारम् ।

श्रीनगपत्यमिरामवरेशौ दीप्रशयं वरयोगिनमीडे ॥

लोकाचार्याय गुरवे कृष्णपादस्य सूनवे । संसारभोगिसंदष्ट जीवजीवातवे नमः ॥

लोकाचार्यकृपापात्रं कौण्डिन्यकुलभूषणम् । समस्तात्मगुणावासं वन्दे कूरकुलोत्तमम् ॥

नमः श्रीशैलनाथाय कुन्तीनगरजन्मने । प्रसादलब्धपरमप्राप्यकैर्कर्यशालिने ॥

लोकाचार्यपदाम्भोजराजहंसायितान्तरम् । ज्ञानवैराग्यजलधिं वन्दे सौम्यवरं गुरुम् ॥

श्रीजिह्वावदधीशदासममलमशेषशास्त्रविदम् । सुंदरगुरुवरकरुणाकन्दलितज्ञानमन्दिरं कलये ॥

श्रीशैलेशदयापात्रं धीभक्त्यादिगुणार्णवम् । यतीन्द्रप्रवणं वन्दे रम्यजामातरम् मुनिम् ॥